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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5162nd meeting of the Security Council, held on 12 April 2005, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the statement issued by the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) in Rome, on 31 March 2005, in which they condemn the 1994 genocide and commit themselves to renounce the use of force and cease all offensive operations against Rwanda. It considers this encouraging statement as a significant opportunity to move towards the return of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, national reconciliation in Rwanda, and full normalization of relations between the two countries. It commends the role of independent mediator played by the Sant'Egidio community.

"The Security Council calls on the FDLR to turn their positive words into action and to demonstrate their commitment to peace by immediately handing all their arms to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and by taking part in the programme put in place for their earliest voluntary and peaceful return to Rwanda or resettlement, as well as by assisting the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha to fulfil its mandate, particularly with regard to the arrest and transfer to its custody of indictees who remain at large.

"The Security Council encourages all other armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that have not yet done so to renounce likewise the use of force and to take part without delay in the programmes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

"The Security Council urges the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to work together, in close cooperation with MONUC, to make use of the chance given to them to contribute to peace and stability in the whole Great Lakes region of Africa.

"The Security Council welcomes the Government of Rwanda's commitment to receive former combatants, and urges the Government of Rwanda to guarantee the return and reintegration of FDLR members and their dependents to be repatriated, in accordance with applicable standards of

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international law and with respect for the rights and freedoms of the human being.

"The Security Council recalls the need for an effective programme of reintegration to be quickly implemented with the support as appropriate of the international community."